FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Sue Walitsky 202-224-4524
Susan Sullam 410-962-4436
June 5, 2008

CARDIN LEADS PUSH FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FUNDING IN LIEBERMAN-WARNER CLIMATE SECURITY ACT

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin**, a member of the Senate Environmental Committee and co-sponsor of the ***Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act (S. 3036),*** continues to highlight the key role public transportation has in America's urgent drive for energy independence. The Senate is considering this landmark legislation throughout the week.

"The ***Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act*** would be the most aggressive global warming bill in the world, slashing American greenhouse gas emissions by two-thirds by mid-century, putting America in the lead in reducing harmful pollution," **Senator Cardin** said. "This important legislation allows America to take a giant step forward in reasserting our leadership in the world and the environmental community.

"I am especially proud of a section of the bill I authored that will direct **about $171 billion, over the life of the bill, to states and localities for public transportation nationwide**. About two-thirds of this money will go to support existing systems like Washington Metro, MARC and MTA, while about 30 percent will help develop new lines that will take more and more cars off our roads, cut dangerous emissions, ease congestion, and reduce our dependence on foreign energy sources like OPEC. Public transit systems are especially vital to the economic and environmental health of the National Capital Region and the state of Maryland."

WHAT IS THE LIEBERMAN-WARNER CLIMATE SECURITY ACT?

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and lead sponsors Senator Joseph Lieberman (I-CT) and John Warner (R-VA) have prepared a managers' substitute amendment for S. 3036 that is currently under consideration in the Senate.

Title II of the substitute amendment would establish a **cap on greenhouse gas emissions** that declines by about two percent per year from 2005 levels. The bill would reduce emissions from covered facilities by 19 percent below current levels by 2020 and 71 percent by 2050.

Title IV of the substitute amendment would create a market to allow **flexible trading** of allowances (permits to emit greenhouse gases) through a system that promotes greenhouse gas emission reductions through a verifiable system that rewards the least expensive method possible.

more >>

Proceeds from this "cap-and-trade" system will cover the cost of the bill's provisions, help reduce our deficit and move us closer to energy independence.

Title VI of the substitute amendment establishes a major, formula-driven grants program for public transportation programs. In 2012 the bill allocates 1 percent of auction allowances for the grants program, generating an estimated $1 billion. The percentage of allowances escalates to 2 percent in 2018 and then to 2.75 percent. It stays at this level then through 2050.

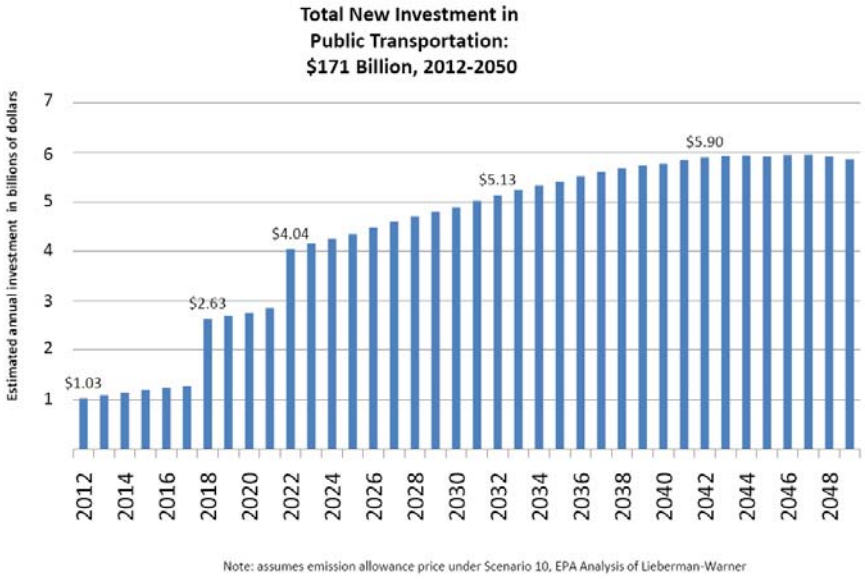
Over the life of the bill, the provision is estimated to generate approx. $171 billion in new funds for public transportation in the country.

Existing systems will receive 65 percent of the proceeds with another 30 percent dedicated to the 'New Starts' program. (The proposed Purple Line in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, Maryland, and the Dulles Metrorail extension in northern Virginia are examples of 'New Starts.') The remaining 5 percent funds a competitive grants program for transportation alternatives and travel demand reduction projects.

Background:

The Problem: The transportation sector accounts about 33 percent of all CO_2 emissions. Between 1990 and 2006, transportation emissions increased by more than 25 percent, representing almost half of the total national growth in greenhouse gas emissions during this period. Sixty percent of these emissions come from personal vehicle use. Studies indicate that projected growth in vehicle travel in the next 30 years will negate the emission savings from the recent changes in Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards.

The Solution: Public transportation use already reduces the emission of more than 37 million metric tonnes of CO2 every year by reducing travel and congestion on roadways and supporting more efficient land use patterns. Public transportation ridership has increased by 32 percent since 1995, providing more than 10.3 billion passenger trips in 2007. However, as ridership has increased, transit facilities across the country are often operating at capacity during peak travel times and transit providers are struggling to maintain the quality of their physical infrastructure and the reliability of their service. There is an estimated $32.8 billion annual capital funding shortfall for public transportation.



Support:

The provision is supported by the American Public Transit Association, a lengthy list of cities and public transit agencies, environmental groups, and smart growth advocates.